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Title: New biodiesel plant to be largest in N.Ky. - Company slated to begin production Sept. 1

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Writer: MIKE BOYER

Lead:

Two area entrepreneurs are developing Northern Kentucky's largest biodiesel plant here.

Article:

FALMOUTH - Two area entrepreneurs are developing Northern Kentucky's largest biodiesel plant here.

Bluegrass Biodiesel LLC., started by Jon Edwards of West Chester Township and Allan Henry of Dry Ridge, expects to begin producing fuel from hog and chicken grease around Sept. 1.

The \$2.3 million plant is located in an existing 43,000-square-foot leased building at the Pendleton County Industrial Development Authority's Commonwealth Commerce Center on U.S. 27.

Initial employment will be about 19. Plans are to produce about 10 million gallons of fuel a year.

That's about five times the amount of biodiesel produced annually by Cold Spring-based Griffin Industries Inc., the agricultural waste recycler that has been producing biodiesel since 1999.

German-based Peter Cremer North America also operates a biodiesel refinery near St. Bernard.

Edwards, a manufacturers' representative for industrial products, and Henry, a contractor, hope to double capacity next year if things go well.

"The fuel market is very volatile, but if things go as planned we're planning additional plants in the future," Edwards said.

Edwards and Henry have been working on the project since early 2004, mainly as a way to help offset U.S. dependence on foreign oil.

"When we started we investigated existing technology, but didn't like that because it limited the type of feedstock we could use," Edwards said. "So we developed our own technology

allowing us to use a wider array of feed stocks."

Oils and fats are converted to biodiesel through a chemical process known as transesterification that separates glycerin used in soap and other products and leaves methyl esters, or biodiesel, which can be burned as pure fuel or blended with regular diesel.

"We plan to market the fuel within about a 200-mile radius," he said, to hold down transportation costs.

The state of Kentucky has begun offering tax incentives to encourage biodiesel production, but Edwards said his company hasn't taken any yet.

But he said the state has been helpful in expediting permits for the project: "Kentucky has been very receptive to what we're doing."

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